



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT JOINS FAITH LEADERS FOR CITYWIDE DAY OF PRAYER**

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joined faith leaders across all denominations from communities throughout Chicago today for a shared moment of prayer for the health and safety of our city. The Chicago Day of Prayer is a moment to pause and reflect on the tragic toll that COVID-19 has had on our city and families and to remember that we have the tools to combat this deadly virus and save lives. Participants gathered at Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church on Chicago's South Side to also pray for peace and safety in all 77 Chicago neighborhoods.

"No matter where you live or how you worship, prayer is universal," said Mayor Lightfoot. "The faith community has been an incredible partner to the city throughout the pandemic and is instrumental in reaching our residents and protecting our communities. I am grateful that our faith leaders are stepping up once again to collectively pray for a safe and healthy holiday season while reminding our city of the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters."

Since the start of the pandemic, close to 8,000 Chicagoans have died from COVID-19. While more than 83 percent of residents age 5+ have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine over the past two years, just 17 percent have received the most recent, updated vaccine booster targeting the Omicron subvariants, known as the bivalent booster, since it became available after Labor Day.

"Vaccines remain the best way to protect yourself and those around you from COVID-19, and it is so important that everyone age 5 and above who has previously been vaccinated get the newly updated vaccine booster now, before the holidays," said Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Medical Director Geraldine Luna, M.D. "With all our vaccines, we have the tools to prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and death. Please give yourself and your family the gift of health — get your updated COVID-19 booster and your flu shot."

In order to continue to ensure that faith leaders have the information and support they need to encourage their communities to get vaccinated against COVID-19, CDPH has developed additional initiatives in partnership with an ecumenical,



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multifaith coalition to reach high- to moderate-risk communities and populations. This includes the ***I'll Hold Your Hand Vaccine Ambassador Program***, in which faith communities across the city provide support and comfort to those who are fearful, anxious, and in need of additional guidance and support around vaccination. Building upon this premise, the *I'll Hold Your Hand Vaccine Ambassador Program* gives faith communities the opportunity to organize members to provide hands-on support — literally — and hold the hand of a person struggling to get vaccinated because of fear.

For a full list of participants in the Chicago Day of Prayer, go to [chi.gov/dayofprayer](https://chi.gov/dayofprayer).

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